

State Legislators sign letter to call on the Senate to enact permanent and mandatory postpartum Medicaid coverage

Quote document

“The earliest days of parenting are critical for connection and learning. We should have policies that reflect the science that tells us this is important and recognize this investment will last a lifetime.” - **State Representative Geran Tarr, Alaska**

“Prenatal and postnatal care are critical for babies and moms and that’s why I am proud to advocate on behalf of my constituents to extend postpartum care.” - **State Representative Eleni Kavros DeGraw, Connecticut**

“We know that quality postpartum leads to the best outcomes for new moms and babies. I support extending postpartum care to Medicaid moms and ask that we take this important step to Build Back Better!” - **State Representative Susan Lontine, Colorado**

“Black maternal healthcare lacks the equity it deserves. My constituents deserve adequate time off after childbirth, and as a lawmaker it is important to me to ensure that our federal policy allows for up to a full year of postpartum Medicaid coverage.” - **State Representative Robyn A. Porter, Connecticut**

“As a Black mother, Registered Nurse, and legislator who has experienced preventable complications during pregnancy and childbirth, I look forward to the day when Black women can celebrate pregnancy, childbirth and postpartum without fearing for their lives and for the lives of their children. I look forward to the day when Black women's concerns are heard and not belittled. I look forward to the day when data will show that Black women are just as likely to survive childbirth as their white counterparts. And black babies are just as likely to live beyond age two, as their white counterparts. You have an opportunity to be a part of that change. You have an opportunity to save lives. We all have a moral obligation to do the right thing.” - **State Representative Melissa Minor-Brown, Delaware**

“Measures like this can and should receive bipartisan support, as it has in Florida. It's important that we support legislation that actually increases the chances of life and preserving that life, rather than getting caught up in political games that only pretend to care about babies and their mothers.” - **State Representative Dotie Joseph, Florida**

“It is imperative that the Senate protects Black mothers. They deserve to have permanent and mandatory postpartum Medicaid coverage for an entire year after birth.” - **State Representative Rhonda M. Burnough, Georgia**

“As a labor doula practicing in hospitals during the COVID-19 pandemic, I can attest to the strength of growing families and will assert that they deserve to be respected by the state of Georgia’s Medicaid system in the form of postpartum support.” - **State Representative Park Cannon, Georgia**

“Despite studies that show that extending postpartum Medicaid coverage for one year would help address the maternal mortality crisis in Georgia, politics has gotten in the way and the coverage was only extended for six months. While six months is better than what was offered previously, it still falls short of addressing the issue to our fullest potential. This crisis, which disproportionately affects black women here in Georgia and across the country, deserves more than the bare minimum. That is why I support addressing maternal mortality by adding postpartum Medicaid extension into the Build Back Better Act.” - **State Representative Jasmine Clark, Georgia**

“Georgia has 75 counties without a practicing OB/GYN and over 10 hospitals to close in rural areas. As a critical care nurse, I must fight to improve the maternal mortality rate in Georgia and decrease the number of preventable pregnancy-related deaths.” - **State Representative Viola Davis, Georgia**

“Georgia is the deadliest state for pregnant women. The maternal mortality rate is more than twice the national average and it's worse in South Georgia. Rural hospitals have closed, many due to the lack of medicaid expansion, and women (and their babies) may or may not make it the 40-60 miles they have to drive to get to the hospital if they're in duress.” - **State Representative CaMia Hopson, Georgia**

“Healthcare should be a right and not only afforded to the privileged few. Our Humanity is tied together and health is our number 1 collective responsibility.” - **State Representative Donna McLeod, Georgia**

“As a mom of four small kids and a representative who has advocated for constituents with small children, I fully understand that the ability to access essential medical care in the first year postpartum is essential for all families to thrive. If we want to address disparate pregnancy outcomes, we need to make sure everyone can get the care they and their families need.” - **State Representative Rebecca Mitchell, Georgia**

“It is so important to me because it would help so many of our Constituents.” - **State Representative Sheila C. Nelson, Georgia**

“Georgia's mothers are dying at the highest rate in the country and we can help save them by permanently extending postpartum Medicaid coverage for a year after birth. Women's healthcare has not been a priority for too long, but now is the time to change that.” - **State Representative Shea Roberts, Georgia**

“It is time that we take important health measures to protect the lives of mothers, babies and families. Although long overdue, this is a step in the right direction.” - **State Representative Kim Schofield, Georgia**

“True Reproductive health justice requires opportunities and access to health care before, during and after pregnancy. It is clear where we have fallen short in the past and where we should make fixes to provide complete and effective coverage for those who need it most. Postpartum Medicaid Extension- coverage for up to one year after giving birth- is necessary for birthing people, families, and communities to thrive regardless of the state in which they live. I join with my counterparts from around the country in urging Congress to take this seriously.” - **State Representative Kam Buckner, Illinois**

“Maternal mortality rates are currently at an all time high. Together we can reduce those rates.” - **State Representative, Carolyn Jackson, Indiana**

“If we want our country to be a safer place to have a baby, we’ve got to do a better job of caring for new parents. Lack of post pregnancy health care has dangerous consequences that can throw American families' lives into chaos.” - **State Senator Janet Petersen, Iowa**

“If we want strong communities, we must invest in the health and well-being of families. Ensuring access for parent and child to health care following birth lays the groundwork for a lifetime of better outcomes.” - **State Senator Sarah Trone Garriott, Iowa**

“Women who have given birth deserve time to secure their health with continued medical Medicaid coverage for a minimum of one year after delivery.” - **State Representative Marti Anderson, Iowa**

“Healthy Mother’s = Healthy Children. Mothers having access to healthcare means more women experiencing mental health issues will be identified earlier and interventions can be employed.” - **State Representative Joni Jenkins, Kentucky**

“I’m a mama who knows that now is the time to protect babies, pregnant and postpartum people. We can’t wait.” - **State Representative Attica Scott, Kentucky**

“I was proud to introduce this legislation in Louisiana earlier this year, and am happy to report that we hope to have one year postpartum coverage implemented in Louisiana in 2022.” - **State Representative Mandie Landry, Louisiana**

“Postpartum Medicaid coverage for a full year has broad support in Maine -- we adopted the federal extension unanimously this past legislative session. Birthing parents and newborns face medical challenges and unique vulnerabilities during the first year, and making sure there’s continued affordable access to health care means better outcomes for Maine families.” - **State Senator Anne Carney, Maine**

“American children deserve a good start in life, and that begins with mothers who are healthy. Now is the time to enact permanent and mandatory postpartum Medicaid coverage for one year after birth so that families everywhere can thrive.” - **State Representative Victoria Doudera, Maine**

“It is beyond time for the United States to recognize what almost 200 countries already have, paid parental leave is health care and health care saves lives. Sometimes things really are that clear and simple.” - **State Representative Thom Harnett, Maine**

“Healthiest outcomes for infants and parents is critically important for lifelong success in health, education, and career. This is vitally important to our families and our communities. Reducing inequities in care, avoiding costs later by preventing and intervening in any problems whenever possible is good for all. This is a wise investment.” - **State Representative Jay McCreight, Maine**

“I struggled with postpartum depression after the birth of my twins, and now how much harder that makes being present for your little ones. If we are serious about making sure our children have healthy early childhoods, then we must support mothers as they recover from their pregnancies and nurture their babies.” - **State Representative Rebecca Millett, Maine**

“Birth is not the end of the need for Medicaid but the beginning. To cut off aid at such a time is cruel and heartless.” - **State Representative Lynne Williams, Maine**

“The Postpartum Medicaid Extension is a necessity for birthing people and their families. Research shows the majority of maternal deaths are entirely preventable and many occur within a year of giving birth. We must act now to ensure pregnant and postpartum individuals have access to quality health care nationwide.” - **State Representative Christine Barber, Massachusetts**

“The patient outcome disparities of communities of color are a public health crisis. We must continue to expand access to healthcare to ensure that every American has access to quality and affordable care.” - **State Representative Ranjeev Puri, Michigan**

“With infant mortality amongst African American babies in the state of MS and MS African American mothers giving birth have the highest death rate in the nation, I stand strong with President Biden in expanding Medicaid. With this we ensure healthier babies and healthier mothers. This saves lives.” - **State Representative Sonya Williams Barnes, Mississippi**

“Early intervention is the most effective prevention for health and developmental conditions. Providing health care access to all new mothers and babies plays a critical role in identifying underlying conditions and promoting long-term health and quality of life. At the end of the day, this is just good policy for all of us.” - **State Representative Ingrid Burnett, Missouri**

“The continuum of care for a mother's postpartum is essential to positive outcomes for our next generation.” - **State Senator Machaela Cavanaugh, Nebraska**

“I have been an advocate for women's pregnancy health for almost 20 years. Preconception and postpartum care are essential to the health and wellness for women and most important to

eliminate the birth disparities among low income and women of color. “ - **State Representative Michelle Gorelow, Nevada**

“There are two people who need to be cared for following birth... only one gets the care they deserve.” - **Assembly Member Sarah Peters, Nevada**

“Permanent and mandatory postpartum Medicaid coverage for one year after birth is good for moms AND babies and critical to advance health equity.” - **State Senator Becky Whitley, New Hampshire**

“Many new moms in my state can benefit from this legislation” - **State Representative Maria Elizabeth Perez, New Hampshire**

“This important provision will not only protect a mother's physical health but also her mental health which is so important to her and her child. It will also keep the family in a circle of medical care, building trust in those who can help them make healthy choices in an increasingly complex world. This is particularly important here in rural Coos County, N.H.” - **State Representative Edith M. Tucker, New Hampshire**

“Keeping babies and their Mom's healthy is good for everyone.” - **State Representative Liz Thomson, New Mexico**

“You cannot put a deadline on people experiencing complications and morbidities postpartum because everyone's experience is deeply personal. Sixty days is not enough,” said New York State Assemblymember Jessica González-Rojas. “Our communities of color, women and people who give birth deserve a lot more than that. I join my colleagues in government across the nation in calling on Congress to enact permanent and mandatory postpartum Medicaid coverage for one year. Our bodies are not just machines for reproduction. Treat us with the respect we deserve.” - **Assembly Member Jessica González-Rojas, New York**

“NC has a high infant mortality rate. This extended coverage would help address that unfortunate reality and allow for healthy mothers and infants. In NC, the Republican-led General Assembly won't allow us to expand Medicaid in any way and about 600,000 residents fall in the Healthcare Coverage Gap. This change at the federal level would make a big difference and help us support healthy mothers and babies.” - **State Senator Natasha Marcus, North Carolina**

“As a community health executive, I worked for 35 years with low income African American mothers in assisting them to get prenatal and postpartum care. This bill is critical to ensure access to care for minority infants and mothers- a healthy mother means healthy infants and children. Let's make healthcare equitable - it's about time.” - **State Senator Gladys A. Robinson, North Carolina**

“We know that the longer new moms and babies are supported with medical care the better their long term outcomes.” - **State Representative Susan Fisher, North Carolina**

“Pregnancy puts a body under extreme stress and can cause serious health issues, including silent killers like high blood pressure, that need to be closely monitored after childbirth. But right now, Medicaid coverage for new mothers ends just two months after a baby is born. Mothers are suffering. North Carolina ranks 30th in the country for its maternal mortality rates. Extending Medicaid coverage for a full year postpartum would drastically improve maternal health outcomes and save lives in our state and nationwide.” - **State Representative Julie von Haefen, North Carolina**

“Ohio has recently passed a budget providing for 1 year postpartum care to improve outcomes for both infants and mothers in the critical first year. This is a policy that should be instituted at the federal level to save the lives of mothers and babies across the country.” - **State Senator Nickie J. Antonio, Ohio**

“Ohio did the right thing by extending postpartum Medicaid coverage for birthing individuals to one year. We know, however, that this change is not permanent nor mandatory. We must recognize that ensuring new mothers have access to healthcare is critical for so many reasons, including to prevent and treat both physical and mental health conditions and advance health equity. Simply put - we stand to lose too many babies and mothers if we do not implement this policy change.” - **State Senator Teresa Fedor, Ohio**

“Deep disparities in maternal and new-baby health and well-being exist for mothers and children of color across our country and in my district. The Postpartum Medicaid Extension to provide coverage for a year after the birth of a child will make a major difference in access to care and improve healthy birth outcomes for many of our most vulnerable constituents.” - **State Representative Anna Williams, Oregon**

“Pennsylvania has seen a disturbing increase in maternal mortality – the deaths of women during pregnancy or up to one year after birth—and the numbers are even worse for women of color. We know providing on-going health care is necessary, in order to support both mothers and their children. Extending Medicaid postpartum helps ensure that new moms can get the care that they need and deserve.” - **State Representative Dan Frankel, Pennsylvania**

“The first year postpartum is not only a vital period of development for babies, but it’s also a significant time for parents recovering from childbirth and adjusting to new roles and challenges. In taking the step to opt-in to expand Medicaid coverage, we are placing the health and wellbeing of families and children first. This is a significant opportunity to save lives, improve access to quality care, and set new families up for success.” - **State Senator Carolyn T. Comitta, Pennsylvania**

“Postpartum Medicaid coverage is essential -- health care is health care.” - **State Senator John Kane, Pennsylvania**

“The United States’ healthcare system is one of the most expensive in the world, yet among our peers, we have the highest rate of pregnancy-related deaths, two-thirds of which are preventable. It’s clear that as a country, we are failing women and birthing people. This Medicaid extension is crucial to shift our paradigm of care and to fight the systemic racism in the medical industry, which shows itself in the disproportionate harm to Black and Indigenous women.” - **State Senator Nikil Saval, Pennsylvania**

“The extension is medically necessary for the best outcome for parent and child for many of our constituents. It’s evidence-based policy and would provide an opportunity for good preventive health care.” - **State Representative Liana Cassar, Rhode Island**

“Extending Medicaid coverage for one year after birth will improve postpartum and health outcomes for the covered parents. This is cost effective and further frankly simply provides the healthcare access that every person should have. It’s a moral imperative, and I strongly support this measure, both at the state level and more comprehensively at the national level.” - **State Representative Rebecca Kislak, Rhode Island**

“A key component to addressing the nation's concerning maternal mortality rate is improving access to medical care during and after pregnancy.” - **State Representative Michelle E. McGaw, Rhode Island**

“Postpartum care is not a luxury! It is a necessity. When will the health of women of color be a priority?” - **State Representative Cynthia Mendes, Rhode Island**

“Black women showed up in record numbers in the last election and saved our democracy. Now it’s the United States of America’s turn to step up and save Black Mamas lives.” - **State Representative Marcia Ranglin-Vassell, Rhode Island**

“This is a perfect way for "prochoice" and "prolife" people to work together in support of women!” - **State Representative Tim Mathern, South Dakota**

“Tennessee has one of the highest rates for maternal mortality in the country, this legislation will help remedy that. It will also address the wide racial and ethnic disparities we see in maternal health.” - **State Representative Gloria Johnson, Tennessee**

“Postpartum patients often have medical needs that extend beyond 60 days. This extension of coverage is so important for the well-being of families.” - **State Representative Rosemary Lesser, Utah**

“The COVID-19 crisis has amplified disparities in our health care system and we must do everything we can to dismantle this. True reproductive freedom must include equal access to postpartum care.” - **State Representative Selene Colburn, Vermont**

“Our treatment of pregnant and postpartum individuals indicates how we value our community's well being. This important time is needed for a person's recovery and healing while establishing healthy bonds between caregiver and infant... Too many Vermonters end up harming their health and family's well-being by being forced to return to work too soon due to economic necessity after having a baby. The time is now to have a humane system to support new parents/caregivers.” - **State Representative Emma Mulvaney-Stanak, Vermont**

“Our maternal health care outcomes in the US, especially for BIPOC people are appalling,. Expanding Medicaid postpartum coverage for a longer time period will save lives. It is the right, just, and moral action to take.” - **State Representative Barbara Rachelson, Vermont**

“We know that with the lack of paid family medical leave people who are post part may have chosen to leave their jobs, or may be forced to take unpaid leave and thus medicaid expansion may be the only way for them to access the medical care that they need. Further expansion of medicaid may be one pathway towards broader coverage and eventually a universal healthcare system.” - **State Representative Tanya Vyhovsky, Vermont**

“Providing a full year of health coverage to postpartum parents is the right thing to do. It's good for families; it's good for public health. That's why we passed SB 5068 in Washington State — and why I'm calling on the federal government to permanently enact this important policy nationwide.” - **State Senator Emily Randall, Washington**

“As a person who just gave birth to my third child, I know how critical postpartum care is to recovering from birth and being able to care for your baby. This is basic healthcare that every birthing person needs and deserves, and it will give babies their healthiest start in life by caring for their parents.” - **State Senator Kelda Roys, Wisconsin**